

KENTUCKY HISTORIC RESOURCES
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY FORM
(KHC 91-1)

COUNTY McCracken
RESOURCE # MCN-P 781-15
RELATED GROUP # 751
INTENSIVE DOC. /
EVALUATION N
DESTROYED /

For instructions, see the Kentucky Historic Resources Survey Manual.

1. NAME OF RESOURCE (how determined): /

Hotel Metropolitan - initial name

2. ADDRESS/LOCATION:

724 Jackson Street
Paducah KY 42003

3. UTM REFERENCE:

Quad. Name:

Date:

Zone:

Easting: / / / / / /

Northing: / / / / / /

Accuracy: /

4. OWNER/ADDRESS: Betty Dobson, President

Upper Town Heritage Foundation
PO Box 7602
Paducah KY 42003

5. FIELD RECORDER/AFFILIATION:

Sharon Post - UTHF secretary

6. DATE RECORDED: May 15, 1999

7. SPONSOR:

8. INITIATION: /

9. OTHER DOCUMENTATION/RECOGNITION:

/ Survey

/ HABS/HAER

/ KY Land

/ Local Land

/ NR

/ R&C

/ NHL

Other:

10. ORIGINAL PRIMARY FUNCTION: / / /

hotel

11. CURRENT PRIMARY FUNCTION: 0 8 0

being restored as museum

12. CONSTRUCTION DATE: 4 / / / 1909

estimated
documented

13. DATE OF MAJOR MODIFICATIONS: paneling and other updates

2/1951-52 interior renovations (made through mid-70s)
7/1961 exterior - aluminum siding / new windows

14. CONSTRUCTION METHOD/MATERIAL:

/ / / / / /

frame

original

/ / / / / /

frame

subsequent

15. DIMENSIONS:

Height 2 floor Width 26' Depth 65'6"

16. PLAN:

/ / / / / /

first

second

third

17. STYLISTIC INFLUENCE:

/ / / / / /

first

second

third

18. STYLE DEVELOPMENT:

/ / / / / /

first

second

third

19. FOUNDATION:

TYPE

MATERIAL

/ / / / / /

piers

original

replacement

20. PRIMARY WALL MATERIAL:

/ / / / / /

weatherboard

original

/ / / / / /

asphalt shingle

replacement

21. ROOF CONFIGURATION/COVERING:

CONFIGURATION

COVERING

/ / / / / /

wood shingle

original

/ / / / / /

asphalt shingle

replacement

22. CONDITION: /

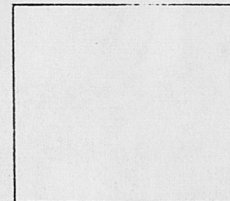
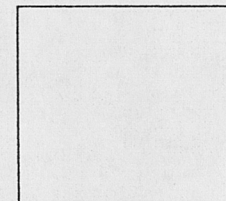
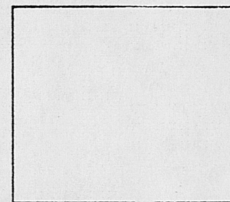
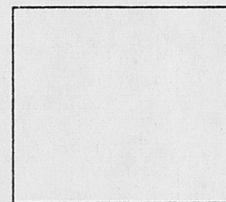
poor - plans for complete renovation following Sec. Int. Standards

23. MODIFICATION: /

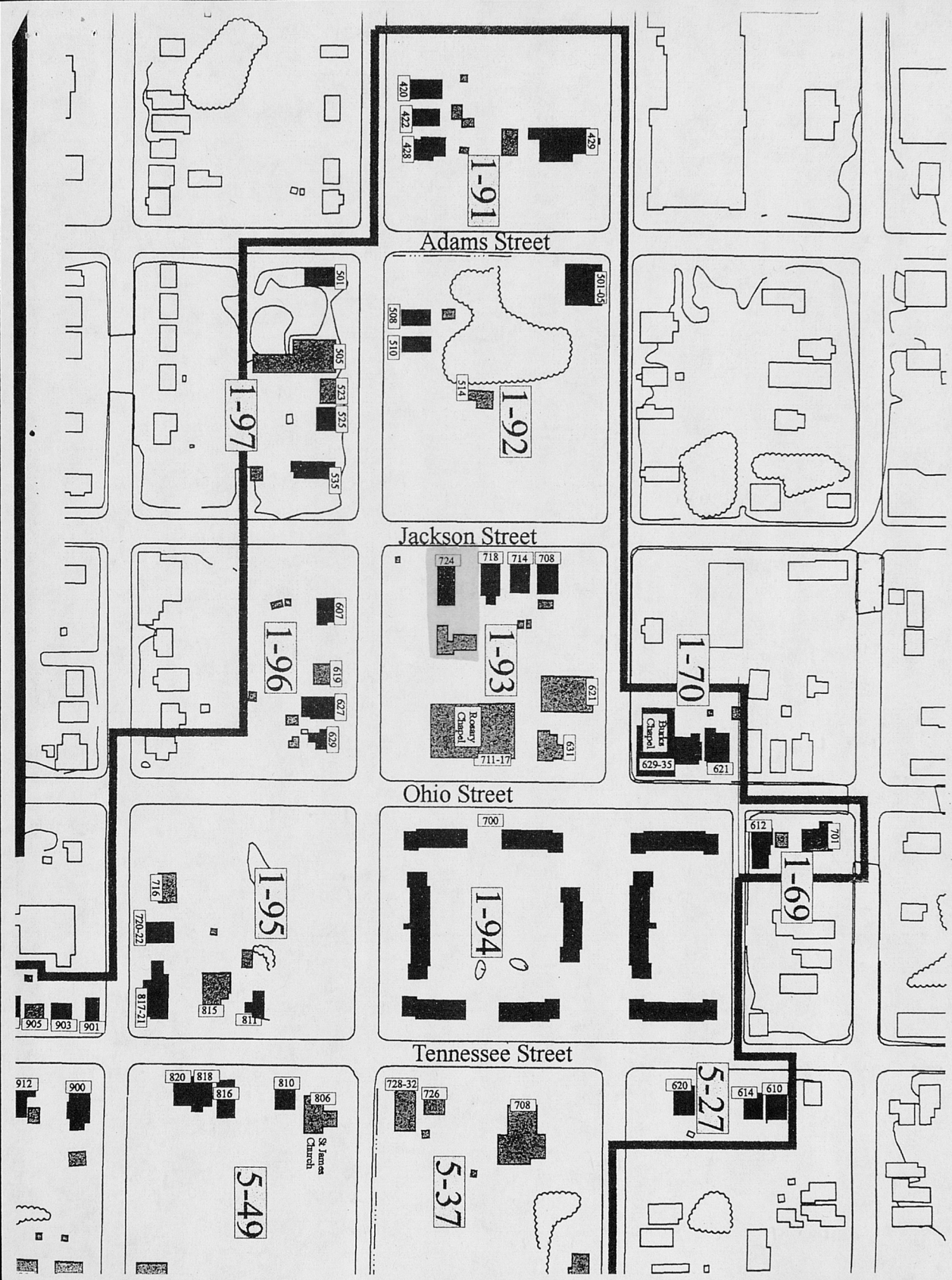
in progress

24. NEGATIVE FILE #: / / /

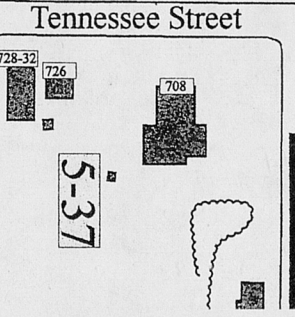
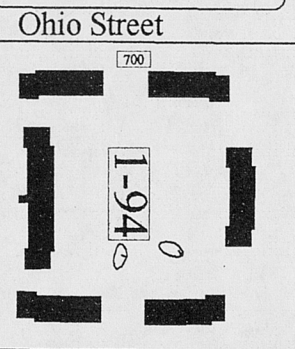
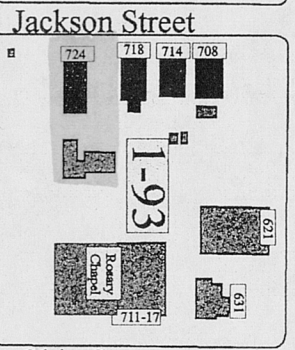
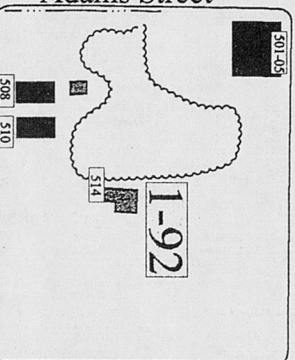
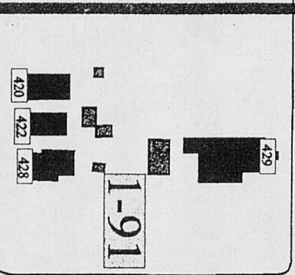
Write resource # on back of all prints.



COMMENTS/HISTORICAL INFORMATION:



Adams Street



Jackson Street

Ohio Street

Tennessee Street

1-97

1-96

1-95

1-69

1-70

5-27

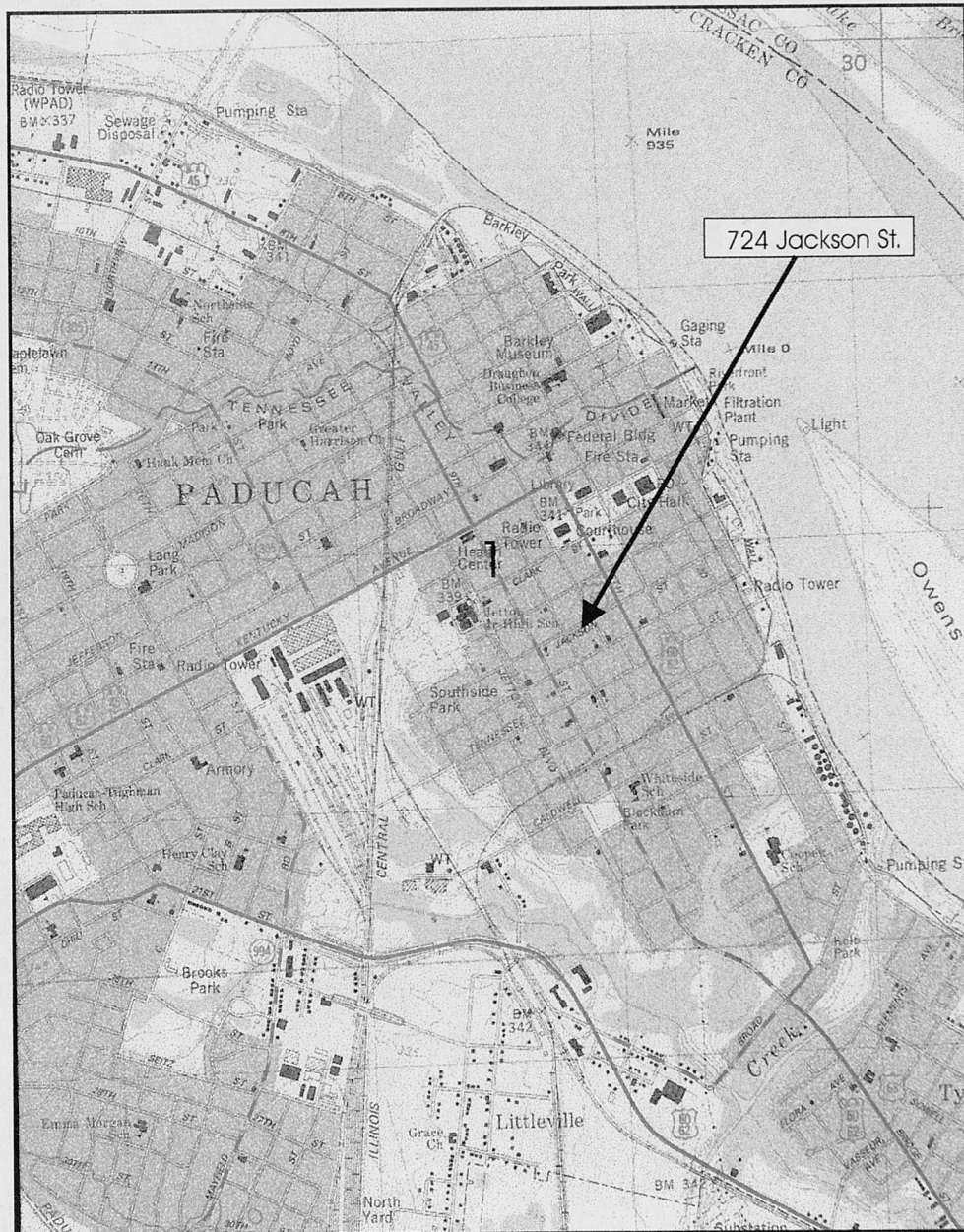
5-49

5-37

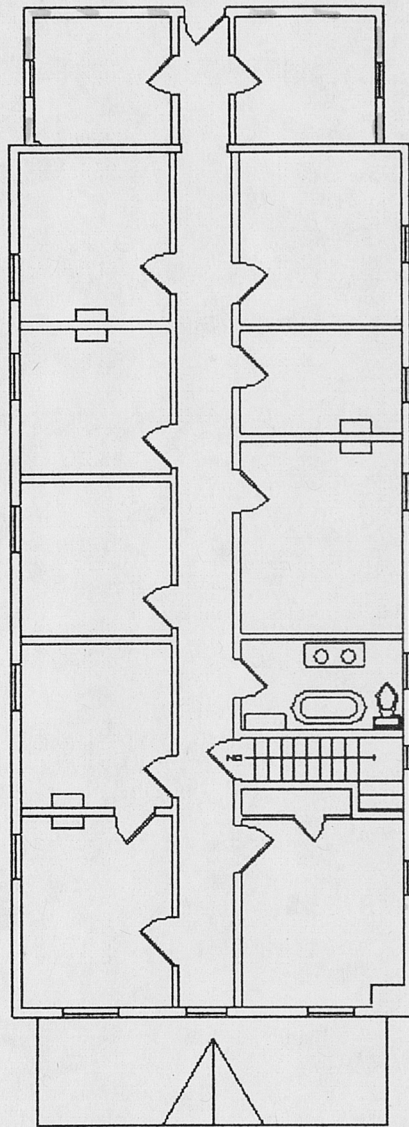
St. James Church

Barker Chapel

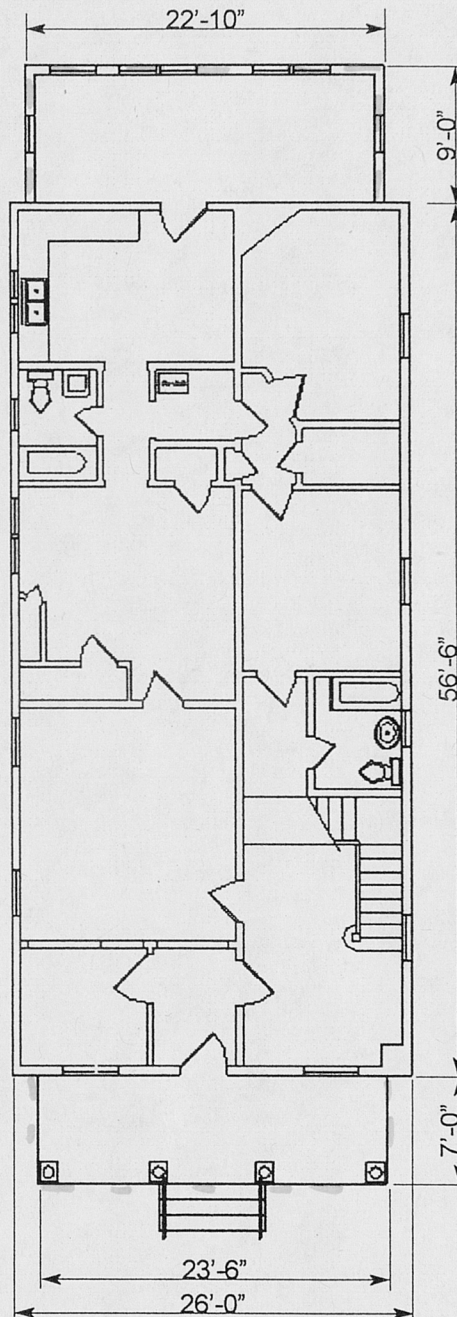
Paducah East Quadrangle (Copy)
Kentucky-Illinois
7.5 Minute Series (Topographic) 1-SE



City of Paducah
Department of Planning
9/13/99



second floor plan



first floor plan

Continuation Sheet--2

29. History

The Hotel Metropolitan (also known as the Metropolitan Hotel and the Metropolitan House Hotel) has stood at 724 Jackson Street in Paducah for more than 90 years. Maggie Steed built the hotel in 1909. It was the first hotel for African-Americans in Paducah. In a booklet entitled *Golden Jubilee of the General Association of Colored Baptists in Kentucky: The Story of 50 Years' Work From 1865-1915*, a short biographical sketch of Mrs. Steed says, "Being economical and having a business mind she saw the need of a modern hotel in the city to accommodate her people."

When Mrs. Steed's husband, Henry Steed died in 1905, he deeded her a small house that sat on the lot at 724 Jackson. Mrs. Steed had the house razed. In November of 1908 she entered into an agreement with Langstaff Orm Manufacturing Co. This huge lumberyard was located at the confluence of Island Creek and the Tennessee River. Langstaff Orm provided materials for the construction of the hotel. In exchange they held the title to her property until she repaid them \$1551 dollars plus interest.

The hotel was completed in 1909. It offered nine rooms and a modern bathroom on the second floor. When the census takers came in 1910, the former Mrs. Steed was living in the owners' quarters on the first floor with her new husband, John Buford. On the day the census takers came, the hotel had four guests--two brick workers and two undertakers. The 1915 *Golden Jubilee* biographical sketch notes that the Hotel Metropolitan was "the leading colored hotel of the city, and doing a prosperous business."

In general, very little is now known about the first visitors to the hotel. They may have been riverboat or train travellers looking for respectable lodging. Some may have been new arrivals looking for a place to stay temporarily. In any case, the Hotel Metropolitan was a nice alternative to the rowdier atmosphere at the Burlington Hotel and Saloon (also called the A. G. Strauss) which opened shortly after the Metropolitan in a brick commercial building near the riverfront.

Business must have been steady. The Bufords made the final payment on the hotel to Langstaff Orm in a little more than five years.

When Maggie Steed Buford White died at the age of 47 in 1924, she left the hotel to Edward and Lucille Wright. The Wrights ran it for four years. In 1928 Henry and Mayme Gause purchased the hotel. Henry Gause had been a businessman in Paducah for years, running a saloon, a billiard hall, and during Prohibition a soft drink stand. His venture in the hotel business was shortlived. By 1933 his wife had retaken the name Burbridge. Mrs. Mayme Burbridge operated the Metropolitan Hotel until her death in 1950.

During this time, performers like Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, Earl Hines, and Ella Fitzgerald and the Chick Ward orchestra played in Paducah. The Harlem Globetrotters visited several times and Negro League baseball teams passed through.

Continuation Sheet--3

29. History--Continued

African-American performers and athletes would most likely have stayed at either the Hotel Metropolitan or the now-demolished Jefferson Hotel which opened in 1925 and stood just around the corner and 514 South 8th Street. In the late 1930's A G Strauss re-opened his hotel on Kentucky Avenue. (It had been a restaurant and barbershop during the 1920s and early 30s.) And in the mid-40s the first African-American hotel on the north side of the city was listed in the City Directory--the Jefferson Hotel Annex at 920 Burnett.

Sometime during Mrs. Burbridge's tenure as proprietor of the hotel, she had the weatherboarded structure updated with a fresh cover of asphalt shingles patterned to look like brick.

In 1951 Lester and Olivia Gaines purchased the Hotel Metropolitan. They renovated the forty year old building and re-opened it in 1953. As part of the renovation, they added new bathrooms downstairs and a 9' x 22'10" addition at the rear of the building. Downstairs the addition held an enclosed porch and upstairs two new small rooms. They were able to recoup the cost of repairs fairly quickly thanks to the workmen who came to the area to work on the Atomic Energy Plant and Kentucky Dam. Some local citizens remember the generosity of the Gaines. They sometimes allowed people new to Paducah to stay at the hotel with the understanding that they would be repaid as these people got on their feet.

Other locals remember B B King sitting on the porch of the hotel strumming Lucille. Other well-known performers who stayed in Paducah during the waning days of segregation were Bobby Blue Bland, Fats Domino, and Ike and Tina Turner.

After desegregation, the hotel functioned like a rooming house, closing its doors finally in 1996. In March 1999, the old, swaybacked hotel was condemned by the City. During these most recent years the hotel went more periodic cosmetic changes. The most dramatic of these came in 1961 when the original single-pane double sash windows were replaced with shorter horizontal muntined double sash windows and the whole structure was covered in white aluminum siding, leaving only the original architectural details on the front porch exposed. Inside, walls in the upper hallway and some rooms were paneled and ceilings in the upper hall and the first story living quarters were dropped.

The hotel does, however, retain some notable historical architectural features: some rooms retain original plaster and vintage wallpaper, linoleum or rugs, and heaters. From inside the rooms original transoms are visible. The bathroom still has the original clawfoot bathtub and double sink.

Continuation Sheet--4

30. Building Importance

The Hotel Metropolitan was the first and is the only surviving segregated Black hotel in Paducah, Kentucky. It was constructed during a time of great economic vitality for all Paducah, in a thriving Black neighborhood. It provided lodging to common and well-known travelers for the duration of segregation and beyond.

THE FILSON CLUB
LOUISVILLE, KY.

Golden Jubilee

of the

General Association of Colored Baptists In Kentucky

The Story of 50 Years' Work
From 1865-1915

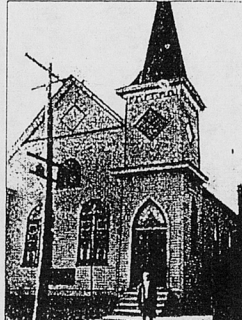
Including many Photos and Sketches, compiled from unpublished
manuscripts and other sources, by C. H. Parrish, Mod-
erator, and the Committee on Program and
Jubilee Volume by order of the
General Association

Edited by
REV. C. H. PARRISH, Moderator
for the Association

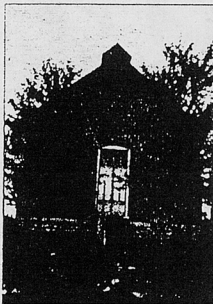
1915
MAYES PRINTING COMPANY
Louisville, Kentucky



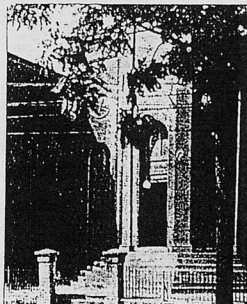
Hotel Metropolitan, Paducah, Ky.



Centennial Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.

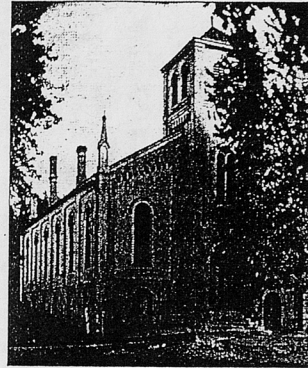


New Bethel Baptist Church,
Bowling Green, Ky.

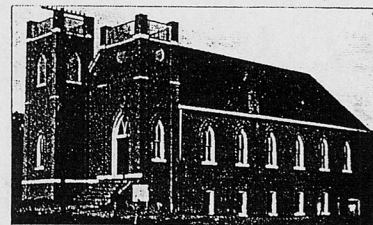


Calvary Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.

152



First Baptist Church, Henderson, Ky.



Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Providence, Ky.

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BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, FOREST,
ANCHORAGE, KY.

This church was organized, July, 1900, with a membership of eight. It held services in different homes. A lot was donated by Sister Birdie Haskins, on which the present edifice was erected. It has had four supplying ministers and two regularly called pastors. The following have served the church: Revs. A. G. Hall, Charles Wallace, J. W. Mitchell, G. W. Floyd, R. J. Terrell and the present pastor, Rev. L. A. Offutt, who took charge, September, 1910. Under Rev. Offutt the membership has doubled itself. The church is alive to all denominational work; is a beautiful church, has a membership of 49; a good Sunday School, Missionary Society and Children's Band.

MRS. LUCY REED.

Mrs. Lucy Reed, better known as Mother Reed, was born in Caroline county, Virginia, and was sold by Negro traders to one Noah Reed of Graves county, Ky., over 60 years ago. She professed hope in Christ when but a small girl in Virginia. After the years of slavery she was baptized by Rev. George Dupee and joined the Washington St. Baptist Church, of which she has been a faithful and consistent member.

She is alive and active in her home doing all her work. She is just as willing to work for the church as in her young days. The doors are seldom opened and finds her not there. She is near a hundred years of age and keeps up every obligation of her church.

MRS. MAGGIE M. STEED.

Mrs. Maggie M. Steed was born in the state of Tennessee, in the year of 1877. She came to Paducah, Ky., in the year of 1893. Being economical and having a business mind she saw the need of a modern hotel in the city to accommodate her people. She is now owner and operator of the Hotel Metropolitan. It is the leading colored hotel of the city, and doing a prosperous business. 724 Jackson St., Paducah, Ky.

WM. STEWART NELSON,

Son of Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Nelson, was born, October 15, 1895, at Paris, Ky. When he was 10 months old his parents moved to Paducah where his father established a flourishing and lucrative practice as surgeon and physician. He attended the Garfield Public and Lincoln High Schools, Paducah, graduating with first honors as valedictorian of his class. Possessing oratorical ability, he won many oratorical honors in the contests he entered. At the age of twelve he professed Christ and united with the Washington St. Baptist Church. He has served his church as Assistant Superintendent of Sunday School, as teacher and as clerk. He represented his Sunday School at the Congress at Tuskegee, Ala., June, 1912, delivering an oration on "The Relation of Home and Church." He entered Howard University, September 29, 1914. His life has been exemplary and has won the respect and admiration of teachers and pupils.

